
Completing Form L-15: Accommodation Request for Learning Disabilities and/or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder



Dear GED Candidate:

We are pleased that you have decided to take the GED Tests! If you have a documented learning disability, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or both, you may qualify for test accommodations. Form L-15 documents your need for accommodations. Ensure that this form is completed carefully. Also be sure to return it to your GED Chief Examiner at least one month before the scheduled testing date to allow time for your request to be reviewed.

YOU MAY HAVE SOME QUESTIONS!

- How do I know if I have a learning disability or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder?
- What are accommodations and how am I approved for them?
- Will accommodations make the tests easier for me?

SOME ANSWERS!

Some individuals have unexpected difficulty passing the GED Tests under standard testing conditions. They have a learning disability—an invisible, neurological disability that affects the brain's ability to understand, communicate, or remember information. Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. The ADA mandates reasonable accommodations when a well-documented learning disability or ADHD is shown to interfere substantially with a person's major life activities, such as learning. Further, the documentation must show that the person can reasonably be expected to have the overall ability to successfully do the task. Adults with learning disabilities and/or ADHD can do very well (even exceptionally well) with some types of learning yet have a very difficult time with others.

Some candidates already have documentation of a learning disability or ADHD. Perhaps you were identified as having one or both of these disabilities while you were in school. The documentation from your school records can often be used to request accommodations on the GED Tests, so new testing may not be required. If you received special services for a learning disability or ADHD, perhaps you, your school, or the certifying professional who diagnosed you will still have your records. If you don't have documentation, you will need it. On the following pages are some case studies that show how other people have gone through the process of documenting a learning disability or ADHD. You will also find a checklist that you can use to track your progress in applying for accommodations.

Whether your documentation is old or new, this review can help you learn new information about yourself. The information you gain can help you build a bridge to a positive new career, sense of self, or higher education. Again, congratulations on your decision to take the GED Tests! If you have more questions, ask the Chief Examiner at your testing center or contact us at our website: <http://www.gedtest.org>, e-mail us at ged@ace.nche.edu, or call (800) 626-9433 to locate your nearest testing center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Edwards".

Fred Edwards
Director, Partner Outreach
GED Testing Service

Some Case Examples of Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

CASE ONE: JOHN

John has had a longstanding problem with sustained attention and concentration since childhood. He was always considered a student with good potential, but school activities caused him so much frustration that he left high school in the tenth grade. Even after getting a part-time job, he had difficulty maintaining satisfactory employment. He has had five jobs during the past year alone. The problems that John's supervisors have had with him showed up on his performance evaluations at work: "doesn't complete tasks," "disorganized," "poor time management," "not listening to supervisor's verbal instructions," "forgetfulness," and "easily distracted, especially when working around customers."

After John was fired from his last job, John's aunt wondered if perhaps he might have ADHD. Many of John's symptoms reminded her of a program she had seen on TV. She encouraged John to contact the local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to see if he might have a disability. At his first appointment, the vocational rehabilitation counselor told John that before services could be provided he would need to undergo some tests to document that an actual disability existed. The counselor arranged for an evaluation with a psychologist knowledgeable about ADHD. After an extensive developmental interview and comprehensive psychological examination, including a computerized test of continuing performance (TOVA), the psychologist diagnosed John with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type (DSM-IV 314.00). John was then referred to a physician who placed him on medication and showed him several behavioral strategies he could practice. Learning to use these strategies to manage his attention problem, the doctor said, would help John improve his job performance.

John still needed a high school equivalency diploma to enter vocational technical training as a heating and air conditioning specialist. Next, the rehabilitation counselor referred John to his local Adult Education program to take the GED Tests. By working with his psychologist and physician, John could provide the proper documentation for his disability as well as the specific types of accommodations that he needed in order to be tested fairly. John received approval to take the examination with extra time, use of a private room to reduce distractions, and frequent breaks during the testing. John passed the GED Tests and is currently enrolled in a heating and air conditioning program, where he also receives the same accommodations in his training. He's doing so well that several prospective employers have shown interest in hiring him upon graduation.

CASE TWO: MARY

Mary has a superior ability to communicate effectively. In jobs requiring her to meet with people, she does very well. She is knowledgeable about her company's products, asks good questions, and explains issues clearly. It would be a surprise to many who know her now that Mary had dropped out of high school. In school she hated doing written work and often failed to turn in her assignments. Her teachers called her "lazy" and "sloppy," no matter how hard she tried, so Mary finally gave up. Mary's employer recently offered her a promotion, but to qualify, she needed a high school diploma. Mary enrolled in a GED preparation class, determined to get her GED—and her promotion. But again, she was frustrated. Each time she needed to write an assignment, it took her much longer than her classmates. One night, Mary's instructor asked to speak with her about her hard-to-read work. During their long conversation, he learned that Mary's trouble with writing originated in her earliest school days and made everyday activities difficult. He suggested that Mary meet with a psychologist and an educational specialist to see if she had a learning disability.

Mary found out that her health insurance would cover a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation. She underwent a long interview and took an intelligence test (WAIS-III) and an achievement test (WJ-R). The psychologist diagnosed Mary with Specific Learning Disability, Disorder of Written Expression (DSM-IV 315.2). Mary received a written report that includes the results of her testing and recommendations for reasonable accommodations that would make it possible for her to be evaluated fairly in the classroom and in examinations. Next, Mary got Form L-15 from the Chief Examiner at the local GED Testing Center. Her instructor helped her complete it by using the information provided in the report, and Mary returned the form to the Chief Examiner and continued studying for the GED Tests. The accommodations and strategies

Some Case Examples of Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

she learned from the report made her preparation go more smoothly. Mary's disability entitled her to extended time and the use of a scribe. A scribe is a person who writes down what Mary says so that her work is legible. Mary passed the GED Tests and got a better job; she now supervises several employees. She notified her employer of her learning disability, and they provided her with a voice-activated computer to help her with her correspondence. Mary is now thinking about going to college so that she can become a project manager.

CASE THREE: BILL

Bill has always been good at taking apart and putting together mechanical objects such as appliances and cars. People say he can "fix anything that breaks." While Bill has excellent visual/spatial and motor skills, he has always had difficulty with word recognition and reading comprehension. When assembling parts on a car, Bill has real trouble reading the technical manuals, even when they describe the steps he knows intuitively. Since childhood, Bill has also had a problem with distractibility, verbal memory, excessive movement, handling interruptions from others, forgetfulness, self-concept, and sustained focus. Together, these problems not only contributed significantly to why he received special education services in school, but also explained why he walked out on his teacher one day and never came back.

When Bill went to a nearby vocational technical school to see about becoming a trained and certified auto mechanic, he learned from the admissions counselor that he first needed to graduate from a traditional high school or earn a GED diploma. The admissions counselor encouraged Bill to visit the local Adult Basic Education (ABE) program for assistance. After an interview, the ABE director said that she suspected that Bill might have learning disabilities and possibly ADHD. She referred Bill to a licensed psychologist for a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation. The psychologist interviewed Bill and then administered tests of intelligence (WAIS-III) and achievement (WJ-R), a computerized test of continuous performance (CPT), and personality tests (MMPI-2 and behavioral rating scales). The psychologist also extensively reviewed Bill's special education records, including IEPs and ITPS (the individualized plans that Bill's teachers had used). After completing the evaluation, the psychologist gave a formal diagnosis of Specific Learning Disability, Not Otherwise Specified (DSM-IV 315.9), and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type (DSM-IV 314.01). The psychologist also determined that Bill had been experiencing significant depressive-type symptoms in addition to his other difficulties. Therefore, a diagnosis of Dysthymia (DSM-IV 300.4) was also given because it contributed significantly to his overall adjustment.

Bill was relieved to know that there was an explanation for the problems he had faced all his life. After receiving interventions to fill in the gaps in his education, manage his fidgetiness and attention problems, and deal with his "blue moods," Bill got Form L-15 from the Chief Examiner at the ABE program and asked his psychologist to fill it out. He took the audiocassette version of the GED Tests in private, with extended time, supervised breaks, and a scribe. Bill passed the tests, got into technical school, and now works full-time as an auto mechanic.

TO REVIEW:

Did any of these accommodations make the GED Tests easier for John, Mary, or Bill? No. Each of them already had the intellectual ability to pass the tests. For example, Mary knew the information and could speak it, but she couldn't clearly communicate it in writing. John also had the ability to pass, but he could not concentrate or follow through long enough to demonstrate everything he knew. Bill's disabilities made it extremely difficult for him to make sense of written information and express his knowledge consistently. The accommodations that they received were tailored to their individual needs.

Since the GED passing standard is set so that fifty-eight percent of current high school students can be expected to pass the tests, it is not an easy exam. Accommodations let people with disabilities demonstrate their true potential.

CHECKLIST FOR GED CANDIDATE AND/OR CANDIDATE'S ADVOCATE

GED candidates sometimes need help in completing the steps needed to apply for accommodations on the GED Tests. An Advocate is someone who works on your behalf and can be a teacher, counselor, social worker, or someone else you trust who understands the information required on Form L-15.

- ☐ Get Form L-15 from the Chief Examiner at the local GED Testing Center.

Chief Examiner's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

- ☐ Complete all portions of Part I, Section B.

- ☐ Sign Form L-15 on line 6 of Part I, Section B.

- ☐ Obtain needed information from certified professionals. For example:

☐ If you had special education services while in school, call the last school you attended to find out how to request a copy of your files.

☐ Write a letter to the school's counselor or psychologist requesting your school records.

Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

School & Address: _____

☐ If you did not have special education but think you have a disability, contact Vocational Rehabilitation Services, your health insurance provider, local mental health clinic, or family physician and make an appointment. Be ready to explain why you think you have a disability and how you would like these professionals to help.

☐ Record the name and telephone number of important contacts:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

- ☐ Record the contact information for your psychologist or certifying professional:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

- ☐ Keep all your appointments for clinical interviews and testing.

- ☐ Ask questions about any part of the evaluation process that you do not understand.

- ☐ Make sure every part of Form L-15 is complete. It is okay to copy information from another report onto Form L-15. Be sure that:

☐ Form states the disability or disabilities (diagnosis).

☐ Form is filled in with IQ test "standard scores" (Part III, Section B).

☐ Form is filled in with achievement test "standard scores" (Part III, Section C).

☐ The accommodation(s) you are requesting are directly related to your disability.

- ☐ Make sure all doctors letters are written on official stationery that provides their address, telephone number, and license information.

- ☐ Keep a copy of the completed Form L-15 and any letters you send.

- ☐ Return the completed, signed Form L-15 to the GED Chief Examiner. Record the date: _____

FORM L-15: Accommodation Request for Learning Disabilities and/or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder



PART I: INFORMATION

SECTION A:

GED EXAMINER

To the GED Chief Examiner: It is important that all requested information in this section be filled in by you before you give the form to the GED candidate. Sign line 7, however, only after the form has been completed. Before you sign, review the checklist on page 7 to ensure ALL needed information is provided. Missing information means the form will be returned, slowing the candidate's request. When you have signed, forward Form L-15 to your state, provincial, or territorial GED Administrator for review.

1. Chief Examiner: _____
2. Center ID Number: _____
3. Center Name: _____
4. Address: _____ City: _____
State/Province/Territory: _____ ZIP/Postal Code: _____
5. Telephone Number: () _____ Fax Number: () _____
6. Proposed Testing Date: _____ E-mail: _____
7. I have reviewed this application and find it complete.

GED Chief Examiner's Signature

Date

SECTION B:

GED CANDIDATE

To the GED Candidate: Make certain that you fill in each section completely and that you sign the release of information on line 6. Your GED Chief Examiner can help with this form but you are your own best advocate. Make certain each person indicated completely fills in the needed information. If you are under 18, your parent or guardian must sign on line 6 as well. Return the form to the Chief Examiner of your GED Testing Center at least one month before your desired testing date.

1. Candidate's Name: _____
2. Telephone Number: () _____
3. SSN (Social Insurance Number): _____
4. Date of Birth/Age: _____
5. Address: _____ City: _____
State/Province/Territory: _____ ZIP/Postal Code: _____
6. **Release of Information:** I grant permission to release my medical or psychological records to the GED Testing Service and its designees to document my request for accommodation. If the candidate is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian's signature is also required.

Candidate's Signature

Parent or Guardian's Signature (if appropriate)

Date

SECTION C: DOCUMENTING PROFESSIONAL

To the Documenting Professional:

- It is important to the candidate's request for accommodations that (1) all sections be completed; (2) those certified or licensed to diagnose learning disabilities and/or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) make these diagnoses; and (3) those making a diagnosis have a minimum of two years experience working with adolescents or adults with learning disabilities and/or ADHD.
- A **certifying advocate** may be the assessment specialist (i.e., the psychologist, educational specialist, or others providing diagnosis). The certifying advocate also may be a person not involved with assessment. Such certifying advocates will transfer information contained in the psychological, educational, or other reports that may accompany a request for accommodations. For example, an advocate may transfer the scores given in a psychological report to Form L-15. In signing this section, the certifying advocate affirms that s/he adheres to the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement* (National Council on Measurement in Education. Washington, DC: 1995).
- A **certifying professional** (e.g., a psychologist or psychiatrist) must be certified or licensed to diagnose learning disabilities and/or ADHD. Comprehensive training and direct experience with adolescent and adult populations is required. Professional credentials of the evaluator, including licensure and certification, are required in compliance with state licensure policies and policies of test production companies that limit administration of certain tests to those with advanced training.
- The GED Testing Service uses a common preferred practices model of documentation that derives from the U.S. Department of Education's definition of a learning disability in compliance with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This means that (1) the candidate should have the ability to pass the tests; (2) the candidate has a significant processing deficit that substantially limits his or her potential to demonstrate that ability on the GED Tests; and (3) substantial impairment of educational achievement is not primarily due to mental retardation, emotional factors, or cultural factors.
- A **standard score** discrepancy model is used. This means that information needs to be provided in standard score format. Measure of ability and achievement must be reported as standard scores (i.e., they are reported with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 in most cases).
- Initial approval decisions are based on the information provided in Form L-15. The form must be carefully completed. Supporting reports will be maintained in secured files to be used only in a case of clinical review.
- Complete psychological and educational reports attached to Form L-15 are used for clinical reviews.
- All **incomplete forms** will be returned to the GED Chief Examiner and to the candidate with a description of what information is missing.

Certifying Advocate:

The certifying advocate may be someone other than the assessment professionals. The certifying advocate can attest to the needed information by referring to the professional's reports (i.e., those of the educational specialist, the psychologist, or others).

1. Name of Certifying Advocate (please print): _____

2. Employment of Certifying Advocate: _____

3. Education of Certifying Advocate (highest degree earned): _____

4. Years of Experience with Late Adolescents/Adults Who Have Learning Disabilities: _____

5. Statement of Diagnosis:

I certify that documentation presented is evidence of _____ that
(provide disability category here)
requires the accommodations requested.

Signature

Telephone Number

Date

PART II: DISABILITY FOR WHICH ACCOMMODATION IS REQUESTED

Certifying professional, please identify the documented disability. There may be more than one.

Section A: Specific Learning Disabilities (*check all that apply*)

☐ Reading Disability (e.g., dyslexia)

☐ Math Disability (e.g., dyscalculia)

☐ Written Language Disability (e.g., dysgraphia)

☐ Other (please specify) _____

Section B: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD, in general, is not thought to be a learning disability. It often coexists with learning disabilities. Therefore, ADHD is included on Form L-15. While ADHD is often defined as a chronic disorder, some ADHD symptoms may not persist in adulthood. Current diagnosis, therefore, is also required. Requests for accommodation based on ADHD coexisting with a learning disability must provide documentation for both conditions.

For the Certifying Professional:

To receive accommodations for ADHD, the current existence of ADHD must be clearly documented.

Documentation must include a letter on official letterhead, signed by a psychiatrist, medical doctor, or psychologist who specializes in the diagnosis of ADHD, stating the diagnosis of ADHD and providing supporting diagnostic evidence of this disability. Diagnostic evidence may include a developmental history that defines symptom onset, specific computerized tests of attention such as the TOVA Gordon Diagnostic Battery or the CPT (Connors' Continuous Performance Test), and clear evidence that the candidate is otherwise qualified or has the cognitive potential to be successful on the GED Tests. Most often this will be demonstrated by test scores such as those given by the WAIS-R, WAIS-III, or Stanford-Binet IV. Information presented must also clearly document how the ADHD substantially limits the candidate's current documented educational achievement and what relevant accommodations are needed. Further, the documentation must confirm that the ADHD symptoms are not due to other psychiatric diagnoses

(continued)

alone, such as Depressive Illness, Bipolar Disorder, or Anxiety Disorder. These diagnoses are accommodated on GED Testing Service Form SA-001. A DSM-IV diagnosis must be included with the certifying professional's signature attesting to the diagnosis of ADHD.

DSM-IV Diagnosis: 314.

314.01 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Combined Type

314.00 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type

314.01 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type

314.9 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Not otherwise specified

DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-Fourth Revision) Diagnosis: _____

Name of Professional Making Diagnosis: _____

Telephone Number: () _____ Date of Assessment: _____

Licensure or Certification: State/Province: _____ Number: _____ Specialty: _____

PART III: DOCUMENTATION

SECTION A: CLINICAL CASE HISTORY ON FILE?

No: ____ Yes: ____ Date of assessment: _____

SECTION B: MEASUREMENT OF POTENTIAL OR INTELLIGENCE

The Wechsler Scales of Intelligence (WISC-III, WAIS-III) and Stanford-Binet IV are preferred. To **support or clarify** these results, other measures of cognitive potential may be used. These could include tests such as the PPVT-III, Ravens, TONI, WJ-R/Cognitive, KBIT, KAIT, etc. These additional tests, however, may not be used as the primary measure of overall potential.

Test Scores

Date of Assessment: _____

Test Used: ☐ WISC-III ☐ WAIS-III ☐ Stanford-Binet IV

Verbal IQ: _____ Performance IQ: _____ Full Scale IQ: _____

WAIS-III Index Scores (if applicable):

Working Memory (WMI) _____

Processing Speed (PSI) _____

Perceptual Organization (POI) _____

Verbal Comprehension (VCI) _____

Subtest Scaled (i.e., Standard) Scores (mean of 10 with range of 1-19):

Information _____

Picture Completion _____

Digit Span _____

Picture Arrangement _____

Vocabulary _____

Block Design _____

Arithmetic _____

Object Assembly _____

Comprehension _____

Digit Symbol _____

Similarities _____

Coding (WISC-III) _____

Letter-number _____

Matrix Reasoning (WAIS-III) _____

Sequencing _____

Symbol Search _____

If prorated IQs are used, please explain the need to prorate: _____

Other supporting documentation: Identify supporting tests used and provide standard scores:

Psychological Diagnostician: This may be the certifying professional, or the certifying advocate may provide the needed information from the report of the psychologist. Psychologists must indicate certification or licensure. This information should be on their report. If not, it should be requested.

1. Name of Psychologist: _____

2. Telephone Number: () _____ Fax Number: () _____

3. Highest Degree and Area of Specialization: _____

4. License Number: _____ 5. Expiration Date: _____ 6. State/Province: _____

NOTE: Discrepancies between ability and achievement are part of the documentation of LD/ADHD.

Indicate model used: ☐ standard score ☐ regression

SECTION C: MEASUREMENT OF CURRENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Date of Assessment: _____ Test of Achievement Used: _____

The WJ-R or WIAT are preferred. Others may be used for support only (e.g., WRAT III).

Current Achievement: *(include Standard Scores)*

Broad Reading: _____

Word Identification _____

Comprehension _____

Broad Math: _____

Calculation _____

Applied Problems _____

Broad Written Language: _____

Dictation _____

Writing Sample _____

Broad Knowledge: _____

Skills _____

Other _____

Other supporting educational documentation: Identify tests used and provide standard scores: _____

Educational or Psychological Diagnostician: This may be the certifying professional or it may be a person who did the educational assessment. Area of specialization and certification may not always be available.

1. Name of Educational Specialist: _____

2. Telephone Number: () _____ 3. Years of Experience: _____

4. Highest Degree and Area of Specialization: _____

5. Certification: _____ 6. Expiration Date: _____ 7. State/Province: _____

PART IV: ACCOMMODATIONS

SECTION A: SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS

What accommodations have been used effectively in the past? *For those who are newly diagnosed, this section may be left blank.* _____

SECTION B: STATEMENT OF NEEDED ACCOMMODATIONS

What evidence leads you to the conclusions that the applicant has a disability? Why are the particular accommodations you have requested necessary for fair testing? How do they relate to the disability? _____

Accommodation(s)

- ☐ Large Print with Extended Time (*specify amount*) _____
- ☐ Extended Time (*e.g., 1 1/2x or specify additional units of time*) _____
- ☐ Audiocassette (*tone indexed*) _____
- ☐ Scribe _____
- ☐ Calculator _____
- ☐ Private Room _____
- ☐ Supervised Breaks (*specify the number of breaks and units of time on and off*) _____
- ☐ Other _____

CHECKLIST

GED Examiner:

- ☐ Complete all portions of Part I, Section A
- ☐ Provide the GED candidate with guidance in completing Form L-15, and ensure that the candidate understands the process

GED Candidate:

- ☐ Complete all portions of Part I, Section B
- ☐ Sign form on line 6 of Part I, Section B
- ☐ Obtain needed information from certified professionals
- ☐ Return signed form to GED Chief Examiner or your advocate

Certifying Professional:

- ☐ Provide all information needed in Part I, Section C, and Parts II, III & IV
- ☐ Sign form and report, if attached

The GED Testing Service considers a qualified candidate to be one who can perform the essential functions of the GED Tests (i.e., higher level thinking skills, core area subject knowledge, and mastery of written language). A qualified candidate for reasonable accommodations must have a reasonable chance of performing the essential functions of the GED Tests.

The GED Tests take approximately 7 hours and 35 minutes to take under standard conditions. The tests consists of five multiple-choice subtests and a timed essay on an assigned topic. The subject areas covered are Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, Interpreting Literature and the Arts, and Mathematics. Passing scores are set so that approximately 67% of traditional graduating high school seniors would pass if they took the tests.

The GED Testing Service reserves the right to request further verification or documentation.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- ☐ Approved for:
 - ☐ Large Print with Extended Time (*specify amount*) _____
 - ☐ Extended Time (*e.g., 1 1/2x or specify additional units of time*) _____
 - ☐ Audiocassette (*tone indexed*) _____
 - ☐ Scribe _____
 - ☐ Calculator _____
 - ☐ Private Room _____
 - ☐ Supervised Breaks (*specify the number of breaks and units of time on and off*) _____
 - ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Not approved; provide additional information specific to LD.
- ☐ Not approved; provide additional information specific to ADHD.
- ☐ Not approved.

Signature of GED Administrator